



It has been my privilege to serve as commissioner of the Indiana Department of Environmental Management for the past two years. And as commissioner, I am pleased to submit to Hoosiers the agency's fourth annual State of the Environment Report.

Like the three reports that precede it, the Annual State of the Environment Report 2001 is an environmental report card. What we seek to achieve with this report is to make comparative environmental data accessible to all Hoosiers. This report lets readers judge for themselves the progress we, together as Hoosiers, have made in cleaning up and protecting our state's environment and preventing pollution in the first place.

In some instances, the information provides supporting evidence that Indiana's air, land and water are cleaner today than a decade ago. In other instances, the report points out that Indiana faces many environmental challenges such as reducing emissions of air toxics, continuing to improve ozone air quality, and starting the process of monitoring for mercury in our air. But if this report is to serve as an accurate balance sheet of Indiana's environment, it must reflect successes as well as challenges.

The key to improving Indiana's environment lies not just with IDEM, but with Hoosiers themselves. And while this report does not gauge Hoosiers' growing interest and concern in their environment, I can tell you that more and more Hoosiers are taking a proactive interest in the state of Indiana's environment. And that's why this report is so valuable.

It, along with IDEM's Web site, www.in.gov/idem, puts more environmental data into the hands of people than ever before. Information empowers people and an informed public understands the challenges confronting society and shapes the necessary dialogue toward meeting the challenges.



So, it is our sincere hope that by providing environmental information to the public which paints a picture of the state of Indiana's environment, we can work together, as both public and private entities, to continue to improve Indiana's environment and work towards making Indiana the best it can be.

Sincerely,

Lori F. Kaplan

Lori F. Kaplan,
Commissioner

www.in.gov/idem/